



## County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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WILLIAM T FUJIOKA  
Chief Executive Officer

April 19, 2010

To: Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chair  
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas  
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky  
Supervisor Don Knabe  
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: William T Fujioka  
Chief Executive Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "W. T. Fujioka", written over a horizontal line.

Board of Supervisors  
GLORIA MOLINA  
First District

MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS  
Second District

ZEV YAROSLAVSKY  
Third District

DON KNABE  
Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH  
Fifth District

### QUARTERLY STATUS OF FOSTER YOUTH IDENTITY THEFT

This is in response to the March 24, 2009 motion by Supervisor Antonovich, instructing the Chief Executive Office (CEO), the Director of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Chief Probation Officer to report back to your Board within 30 days and quarterly thereafter, on:

1. The scope of foster youth identity theft in Los Angeles County and the effectiveness of measures taken to address this problem;
2. Whether AB 2985 and subsequent State implementation instructions sufficiently address the problem and allow the disclosure of all types of identity theft affecting our foster youth; and
3. The County's plan and resources needed to implement the services required by AB 2985.

This update will focus on the status of AB 2698, as well as the status of the local pilot.

### **AB 2698**

County-supported AB 2698, introduced by Assembly Member Block on February 19, 2010, would authorize county welfare departments or the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to release information to credit agencies on behalf of foster youth who may be the victims of identity theft.

*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective And Caring Service"*

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Under current law, the county welfare department is required to request a credit report on behalf of foster youth 16 years of age. If the report indicates that some form of identity theft may have occurred, the county welfare department is required to refer the foster youth to an agency that provides services to victims of identity theft.

AB 2698 would strengthen the procedures for requesting credit reports and handling suspected identity theft of foster youth as follows:

- Authorize the county welfare department or CDSS to request a credit report from three national credit reporting agencies in the year that a foster youth reaches 16 years of age;
- Authorize the county welfare department or CDSS, acting on behalf of the foster youth, to refer matters of suspected identity theft to an authorized governmental agency, such as consumer affairs, or a nonprofit organization that provides information and assistance to victims of identity theft;
- Authorize the agency or nonprofit organization to take remedial action on behalf of the foster youth to clear his or her credit record and to report the results of the action to the referring county or State department; and
- Require the California Office of Privacy Protection (COPP), in consultation with CDSS, the County Welfare Directors Association, consumer credit reporting agencies, and other relevant stakeholders to develop a list of agencies and organizations to which the matter may be referred for assistance in responding to suspected identity theft.

AB 2698 is very similar to County-supported AB 1324, which the Governor vetoed in October 2009.

### **County Plan to Implement**

The Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA), COPP, DCFS and the three credit reporting agencies – Experian, Equifax and Trans Union, are the agencies involved with the Los Angeles County Pilot Project (Pilot). The Pilot is scheduled to run a system test in April 2010. This test will transmit 100 identities of select foster youth to Experian's Secure File Transfer Protocol site for purposes of a credit check and report back. The involved parties have developed a protocol which contains data fields that will allow for a successful credit check and report on findings for follow-up by DCFS and the remediation agencies. The remediation agencies are COPP and DCA.

Each Supervisor  
April 19, 2010  
Page 3

At this time, DCFS's Business Information Systems Division is working with the Internal Services Department and the Chief Information Office's Information Security Division to approve the purchase of Tectia Corporation-SSH Communications Security Corporation-Client software that will encrypt the transport of Client/County data from DCFS to Experian. The software is Experian's requirement to proceed with the transfer of sensitive client data. After the successful launch of the Pilot, agencies will submit quarterly "bulk" requests for checks on 16 year-olds in foster care. If fraud is detected, the remediation agencies will freeze the youth's credit. When the youth's credit is cleared, the freeze will automatically be lifted/removed.

The Department of Children and Family Services with the assistance of County Counsel, was able to secure a Blanket Order (Attachment) signed by the Juvenile Court Presiding Judge, allowing a credit check for foster youth at age 16 for the purpose of detecting and resolving identity theft by approved agencies.

The Department of Children and Family Services will continue to direct foster youth age 18 and older to AnnualCreditReport.com, the only authorized source to obtain free annual credit reports under federal law, for the purpose of reviewing the status of their credit. The DCFS/Probation Youth Development Services Division's Independent Living Coordinators have been designated as the Departmentwide contacts to address identity theft and assist youth with obtaining their credit report.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please let me know, or your staff may contact Kathy House, Acting Deputy Chief Executive Officer at (213) 974-4530, or via e-mail at [khhouse@ceo.lacounty.gov](mailto:khhouse@ceo.lacounty.gov).

WTF:KH:LB  
JS:hn

Attachment

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors  
County Counsel  
Children and Family Services  
Probation

Foster Youth Identity Theft Update\_Board Memo\_April 2010

**FILED**  
LOS ANGELES SUPERIOR COURT

FEB 05 2010

JOHN A. CLARKE, CLERK

BY S. HERNANDEZ, DEPUTY

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
JUVENILE COURT

On behalf of:

Los Angeles County Department of Children  
and Family Service,

BLANKET ORDER RE: CREDIT CHECKS  
PURSUANT TO WIC 10618.6

Petitioner

Pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 10618.6, when a youth in a foster care placement reaches his or her 16th birthday, the county welfare department shall obtain a consumer disclosure (known commonly as a "credit check"), pursuant to the free annual disclosure provision of the federal Fair Credit Reporting Act, on the youth's behalf, notwithstanding any other provision of law, to ascertain whether or not identity theft has occurred.

If the consumer disclosure indicates that identity theft might have occurred, the Department of Children and Family Services shall ensure that consumer disclosures regarding the youth be provided to an approved agency to resolve any indications of identity theft in the disclosures.

To protect the foster youth's confidential information, credit information shall not be shared with anyone other than the youth, the social worker requesting the information, the supervising social worker, minor's counsel, the Court and any agency authorized to assist foster youth with addressing credit problems. At no time shall credit information be shared with anyone not listed above. At the request of minor's counsel, the Court may make an order permitting any other adult access to credit information if the Court finds such person to be actively involved with helping the youth repair any credit problems identified by the credit check performed in

BLANKET ORDER RE: CREDIT CHECKS PURSUANT TO WIC 10618.6

1 compliance with Welfare and Institutions Code section 10618.6.

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3 IT IS SO ORDERED.

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5 DATED:

2/5/10

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MICHAEL NASH

Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court

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